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From: Cindy Hensel [mailto:chensel1@earthlink.net]

Sent: Friday, January 07, 2005 1:50 PM

To: Melissa Miller-Henson

Subject: Comments to blue ribbon task force

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To California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative Blue Ribbon Task Force;

My name is Kenyon Hensel. I am a commercial fisherman who has for the last 22 years worked out of the northern Californian port of Crescent City. I currently represent northern area open access commercial fishermen on the Ground Fish Advisory Panel of the Pacific Fisheries Management Council. I also am the spokesmen for our local port Association "The Crescent City Hook and Line Group".

Most fishermen are very concerned with the abbreviated process you are now undertaking to set a network of marine preserves in our costal waters. All of these fishermen want to protect the habitat and ecosystem they work in. I cannot make this point strongly enough. Do not mistake our resentment and opposition to a process we feel shut out of.

Our anger and frustration is not because we are against the idea of instituting measures that protect fisheries and their habitat. It is because we feel locked out of the process. We do not feel that the needs of the fishing communities are being balanced in the rush to apply MPAs. We have already sacrificed so much by reducing catch, limiting possibly harmful gear, and closing huge areas to hasten stock rebuilding. Since 1999, I personally have taken a 75% cut in the amount of fish I can harvest, and have lost access to many square miles of very productive fishing area.

In light of these facts, you must start this process questioning the present need for, and existing context into which a new network of MPAs would fit.

It may be unnecessary to spend huge amounts of money creating a full-blown system of MPAs, a smaller more heavily studied network might assure greater service to the economy, science, and the ocean ecology. We could answer many questions concerning the worth and efficient structuring of MPAs if we took the time to do on-the-water studies first.

In addition, you and your science team must balance how another management system, imposed over the existing multiple layers of precautionary measures, economically affects fishing communities. This economic harm may no longer be justified when existing protection is considered.

To avoid the possibility that some MPAs may prove to be unnecessary, or at the least less efficient, then expected, I recommend a very important change to the proposed table of contents. Not to impede the process of setting reserves, simply to see language allowing the removal of MPA status from reserves that are not as useful as anticipated, or are more economically harmful then envisioned.

Please include in section IV-H, along with the fazing in of MPAs, sunset clauses requiring MPAs that are not being properly monitored, or are not showing expected benefits, lose their MPA status. This is necessary to avoid MPAs from being set and forgotten, or left to inflict unforeseen economic harm without measurable ecological benefits.

To help us feel invested, we want to see more people who associate with us on your decision-making panels. Please put Susan Slaussinger and Dr Richard Young on the science panel. They are both good choices to help recognize and evaluate the needs of the fishing communities. Thank for your time and consideration.

Kenyon Hensel